

DNR Lake Restoration Program – Process, Criteria and Goals

- Six out of 10 Iowans visit lakes multiple times each year
- Statewide, Iowa's lakes generate \$1.6 billion in annual in-state spending
- A lake is a reflection of both watershed and lake management
- Lake restoration starts in the watershed; it relies on strong local involvement and voluntary participation of landowners

Process and Criteria

The Lake Restoration Program is modeled after the Federal Clean Lakes Program

- The DNR began by ranking 131 of Iowa's significant publicly-owned lakes
- Ranking based on a 5-year assessment of water quality, technical feasibility of restoration, potential economic benefits, use by Iowans, and local support
- The department developed an initial list of 35 significant publicly-owned lakes to be considered for funding
- Communities with lakes not included on the initial list may petition the director of the department for a preliminary lake restoration assessment and explanation of the funding process and criteria
- The department works with representatives of each community to develop a joint lake restoration action plan

Each joint lake restoration plan is developed with the following guidelines:

- Biologic controls will be utilized to the maximum extent, wherever possible
- If proposed, dredging will be conducted to a mean depth of at least 10 feet to gain water quality benefits unless a combination of biologic and structural controls sufficiently assures water quality targets will be achieved at a shallower average water depth
- The costs of lake restoration will include the maintenance costs of improvements to the lake
- Delivery of phosphorous and sediment from the watershed will be controlled and in place before lake restoration begins

Program Goals

- Ensure a cost effective, positive return on investment
- Ensure local community commitment to lake and watershed protection
- Ensure significant improvement in water clarity, safety, and quality of Iowa lakes
- Provide for a sustainable, healthy, functioning lake system
- Result in the removal of the lake from the impaired waters list

Water Quality Goals

- Clarity. A 4 ½ foot secchi depth will be achieved 50 percent of the time (April – September)
- Safety. Beaches will meet water quality standards for recreational use
- Biota. A diverse, balanced, and sustainable aquatic community will be maintained
- Sustainability. Water quality benefits will be sustained for at least 50 years

Budget

- The Lake Restoration Program current annual funding level is \$8.6 million
- Current program activities are in progress at 26 lakes throughout the state and either in the planning or initial community outreach stage at an additional 11 lakes

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IDNR Lakes Restoration Program

